HUMAN EVENTS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor* — *Contributing Editors:* FRANK CHODOROV, WILLIS J. BALLINGER

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Case of the Colonel Generals: Obscured by the studiously confusing utterances of Secretary of State Dulles, a new and hopeful light is playing on the global "war-or-peace" situation and the locus of the optimism is not in the State Department, but in the Pentagon.

Specifically, the generals and admirals have in the past few days become privately fascinated by a public, but little publicized, piece of news from within Soviet Russia, namely: the promotion of 10 colonel generals to the rank of marshal. These ten colonel generals had been — since the end of the last war — "exiled" by Stalin and Malenkov to unimportant provincial posts (just as was Zhukov.) Now they are back in the councils of power and thereby fortify the military in their relative position of influence (much improved in the past month) over the direction not only of military but also of foreign policy moves of the Soviet Union.

As the "high brass" of the Pentagon sees it — this is a constructive sign. These Russian military men are realists; they appreciate the fact that the U.S. has the military power to smash a Red Chinese attack on Quemoy and Matsu; they are in a position to stay the hand of the political zealots in Moscow who might encourage such a throw of the dice by Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai to test "Yankee bluff."

Pentagon has noted — for what it may be worth — another development: in the past week, the Soviet radio propaganda (while still hostile in general to the U.S.) has shown an unexplained disinclination to attack U.S. policy in the Far East, while continuing to lambaste U.S. influence in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

Our own high officers may prove wrong in (what they call) their "evaluation." But for the moment, that's it.

Additionally, it should be reported that some military observers display a bit of disappointment in the "case of the colonel generals." They fear that the allegedly imminent Red attack in the Formosa Strait may be called off, that thereby the possibility of smashing the Chinese Reds would be lost, or delayed. It's a view.

Whatever the high chiefs in the Pentagon may do or view, it must be said — and is being privately said by observers — that the generals and admirals under Ike are of sterner stuff than under Truman. The Bradleys and Collinses — "politicalized generals" — are gone. Today Chief of Chiefs Radford is "tough" and "talks tough" to Ike. So does Air Chief Twining. And Army Chief Ridgway — while at variance with these colleagues — also bluntly states his views to the White House, whether his commander-in-chief likes it or not. Hence — observers say — it's a healthier situation in the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Yalta Papers: Experts who have scanned the released State Department documents believe that some important — and explosive — material has been suppressed. Already, involved arguments about various phases of the famous meeting in Crimea in February, 1944 have started something which should provide disputation for historians for a long time to come.

Some individuals in Washington, who served as important and knowledgeable actors in the behind-the-scenes diplomatic drama of World War II, tell us that the true historical perspective of the Yalta

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Conference can only be obtained if the State Department releases all documents on the Teheran meeting of the Big Three — Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin — which had taken place over a year previously, in December, 1943.

At that conference, Roosevelt turned from hitherto close collaboration with Churchill to an increasing favoritism for what Stalin wanted, which was by no means what the British Premier liked. Our informants say that at Teheran, the pattern of policy — which, among other things, "sold out" Poland — was established and that the Yalta Conference simply made more explicit the underlying policy decided at Teheran. In short, when Roosevelt snubbed Churchill and backed Stalin's strategy at the historic meeting in the Iranian capital, the groundwork of what emerged at Yalta was laid.

But the State Department publication should by no means be dismissed as simply a belated illumination of a chapter of dusty history, according to legislators on Capitol Hill. The unveiling of the Yalta documents is seen as an opportunity for congressional abrogation of the Yalta agreements. Such a repudiation would encourage — it is said — the resistance to Moscow among the peoples in the Eastern European satellite countries. Also, it would raise the morale of Japan which lost southern Sakhalin and the Kuriles at Yalta. Japan is scheduled soon to hold talks with Communist emissaries. Finally, formal repudiation of Yalta — it is claimed — would place us in a strong bargaining position at the international table.

Stock Market Hearings: "Who scared Cock Robin?" seems to be an appropriate question to ask with reference to the Fulbright hearings in the Senate. For, while Senators have quarreled in public and witnesses have squirmed under TV and movie Klieg lights when asked whether stock prices are too high or just right, the market itself has been gyrating crazily, like a car with the back seat driver reaching over and grabbing the steering wheel. Just before the hearings started, Wall Street, according to the *New York Times*, was unable to decide whether the Fulbright committee was "incredibly naive or uncomfortably brilliant." Chairman Fulbright, who started out making soothing sounds about the hearings, has exhibited considerable nervousness about the disturbing effects they were having on the market. "I'm naive about the market," the Arkansas solon once said. He shows it.

Why should the testimony of witnesses or the questions of Senators and staff disturb the stock market? — is the question which Fulbright puts to witness after witness. One observer remarked: "The Senator must know that, if it was only education he was after, he could have got it without even a line appearing in the press." For, within the past few years another Congressional committee made just such a quiet study, which has never been published. Was it naive Democratic politics that started sticking pins into the 18-month-old bull market? Or was it so innocent? Can it be that the Democrats saw the bull market as a rare chance to start undermining confidence in "Eisenhower prosperity?"

Whichever is the fact, the hearings reveal to spectators the key role which financial and economic policies are playing as "1956" approaches. Also, they provide some pretty entertaining clashes.

Obiter Dicta at the Press Table: The talk of Paul Butler, Democratic Chairman, about the possibility that Eisenhower might not choose to run, isn't so "dumb" as the editorial writers proclaim. True, great cries of "bad taste" submerged Butler's remarks about the President and particularly Mrs. Eisenhower. But, it is privately said, the Butler talk got over in the headlines to those who lay more importance on headlines than editorials — that is to the masses of workers and farmers.

● The defeat of the tax cut in the Senate is not final — say the sages. Wait until the whole affair is over, after the joint Senate-House conference, before passing judgment. The entire business is simply a battle of publicity strategy, and whether the White House or Democratic Speaker Rayburn get the most cheers from the crowd remains to be seen. In any case, the decision may be only a "technical knockout," with few laurels for either side.

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● The egregious showing of Harvey Matusow and his two "Fifth Amendment" publishers, before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, has proved a definite set-back to the element which apparently wants to discredit all Government informants on Communist activity. The word should be "informant," not "informer" (which the Left prefers, because of its malodorous associations in history).

● White House shows some worry (very, very privately) about the re-emergence of Sen. McCarthy in the hearings on the Peress case. If Democratic Chairman Sen. McClellan finds difficulty in getting evidence on "Who Promoted Peress," that's a score for Joe. But the principal worry is that McClellan may cooperate with the Wisconsin Senator in his demand that Attorney General Brownell, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. and other Republican big-wigs be called to explain the secret conference of January 21, 1954, when the big drive against McCarthy was "triggered." What has Democrat McClellan to lose by promoting trouble among Republicans?

Also, White House aides are reportedly aroused because McCarthy has publicly charged Milton Eisenhower with appeasement and underlined his influence on his brother, the President. Dr. Milton Eisenhower is known as a "one world liberal" and reportedly sees the President about three times a week in strictest privacy. His visits are rarely mentioned in the press.

Southern Revolt: Ferment among Southern Democrats is expected to show up at a meeting of Southern leaders scheduled to be held on March 26-7 in Texas. These leaders are conservatives — some of them supporters of Strom Thurmond's States Rights party in the election of 1948. The meeting is designed to explore possibilities of independent conservative Democratic action in the next two years, and is born of Southern discontent with Adlai Stevenson, titular leader of the Party. Governor Kennon of Louisiana, after a recent visit to the White House said the Southern wing would not back Stevenson against Eisenhower in 1956. But this is discounted by those who remark that Kennon would like to be appointed Federal Judge by Ike. However, it is true that Stevenson is very unpopular down south.

And Ike no longer enjoys his former popularity there. The Supreme Court de-segregation of the schools decision sparked this tendency, and also the "Councils" movement. The latter — aimed at preventing de-segregation and Negro voting — is described in a current number of *Look* magazine, in an article by Hodding Carter. Carter — who is for de-segregation — admits the strength of the Councils movement. Observers here who know the South believe that the *Look* piece may — by force of its advertising value — spread the Councils movement all over the South.

Hawaii Statehood: The House Committee on Insular Affairs has just reported favorably on the admission of Hawaii to statehood. With a fustian touch the Committee's Report declares that statehood for Hawaii would "dramatize as few other acts could the principle of self-government which the United States is proclaiming to the world."

Recently Representative John Pillion (Rep., N.Y.), member of that Committee, revealed some facts about the Kremlin's power in Hawaii. In 1953 the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) staged a devastating strike there. The strike was called, says Pillion, to protest the conviction of Jack Hall and six others for "plotting to teach and advocate the violent overthrow of the U.S. Government." Two thousand stevedores of the ILWU refused to load military cargo for Korea and in 1954 the ILWU called a strike when the members of a subcommittee of the House were in Hawaii holding hearings on statehood. The President of the ILWU is Harry Bridges. Pillion points out that the secretary to a former Mayor of Honolulu made a practice of greeting Bridges at the Honolulu airport when "that distinguished Communist arrived there" and that he sent "the Honolulu municipal band to money-raising affairs held to defray the legal defense of the Communists." *(See column 1, page 4)*

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The ILWU not only dominates unionism in Hawaii but is particularly powerful in politics. The Hawaii Statehood Commission cites the conviction of Hall and his confederates as proof of "the unalterable opposition of the people of Hawaii to Communism." But Representative Pillion says that the record of the 1954 November election completely refutes the statement. He points out that the Honolulu *Star Bulletin* made a survey of that election and reported: (1) The ILWU indorsed 71 candidates. Of these, 58 won, a batting average of 81 percent. (2) In the Senate, 5 ILWU candidates won out of six candidates indorsed in contests for seven seats — there are 15 seats in the Senate. (3) In the House, 22 ILWU-supported candidates won out of 28 indorsed. There are 30 seats in the House. (4) In the County, 32 ILWU-supported candidates won out of 38 contests which included that for the post of Mayor of Honolulu.

Pillion says that the 1954 election was a "victory for the ILWU and the Communist Party." Advocates of Hawaiian statehood contend that statehood would enable Hawaii to deal more effectively with Communism and the ILWU, but Pillion says that statehood would enable Communists to proceed without Federal interference "to socialize and Communize Hawaii."

The immediate effect of Hawaiian statehood, concludes the New York Representative, would be to "actually invite 2 Soviet agents to take seats in the United States Senate."

The Tariff: The Administration's request that the tariff be cut another 15 percent over the next three years is amazing in view of the facts. Our present tariff is the lowest one in our entire history — lower than it ever was even in the days when we had tariffs for revenue only and not for protection. Our tariff is also one of the lowest in the world today. It is in fact lower than that of any of the principal trading nations of the globe, having been reduced some 75 percent since the New Deal took office in 1933 (and 68 percent since 1937.)

Representative Dan Reed (Rep., N. Y.) points out that our tariff schedules now average only 5.1 percent of the value of imports. By contrast Switzerland's tariffs (it was Switzerland that raised such a clamor when tariff rates were raised to protect our watch industry) average 8.1 percent of imports; France averages 10.6 percent; and Great Britain averages 25.6 percent (20 percent *above* 1937.)

But tariffs tell only part of the story of how the rest of the world restricts trade while blaming our tariff for shackling world trade. Foreign import quotas, currency restrictions, cartels and other devices, says Reed, are in fact "far tighter barriers to free trade than tariffs," and as our tariff has been progressively slashed these devices have progressively increased. The fact is that the U.S. permits freer international trade than any other industrialized country in the world.

Last year Congress was asked to further reduce the tariff and refused. But 1954 was a banner trade year for most European countries in spite of no cuts in our tariff. In contrast, the U.S. experienced a temporary falling-off of trade. This year the internationalists are back determined to get tariff cuts and the Administration has again backed their objectives.

Big Dam Foolishness: The President's implied approval at last week's press conference of a controversial book, *Big Dam Foolishness*, startled the attending newsmen.

Was the President's political naivete coming to an end? Eisenhower's political agitation, it is often asserted at the National Press Club bar, seems to consist mainly of receiving high school student essayists, being photographed with the president of a flower club and shaking hands with a 100-year-old woman who has "asked for a chance to see her President."

FDR and HST did these things, too, but they never neglected a chance to give a White House buildup to young professors, writers and organizers promoting left-wing causes.

Maybe — suggested White House correspondents — Ike may now begin doing the same for the conservative side.

Big Dam Foolishness, by Elmer Peterson (published by Devin-Adair, New York) is a sensational attack upon the Army Corps of Engineers for recommending big dams to solve every flood control problem. Peterson contends that dams do not stop floods! "Dams on the plowlands fight nature," he says. "They do not work with nature. They are disruptive of the water on which the soil depends. Each new dam in this disruption potentially requires another be built to handle the upsetting caused by the first. Each requires that some day another be built because each as it fills with the inevitable silt becomes gradually useless. It is the spreading cancer of dams that is the danger, each one nibbling away at the fertility of the land, each one taking men farther away from nature's demand that water be held, not in vast man-made pools, but on the land where it falls."

Big Dam Foolishness is a convincing document; buy several copies — for yourself, the local editor, your public library, your son or daughter at college. You can get the book from HUMAN EVENTS at the bookstore price of $3.50. With EACH book, we will give you a free 8-weeks' subscription to HUMAN EVENTS. You may have the 8 weeks added to your subscription. Better yet, *send the subscription to someone else who should be reading HUMAN EVENTS.* In sending us your orders, specify the names and addresses of those to whom you want (1) books sent; (2) subscriptions sent. Allow two weeks for fulfillment of subscriptions and books.

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THIS WAS THE HOUSE OF OUR FATHERS:

The Implications of Federal Housing

By JAMES J. KILPATRICK

NOT VERY LONG AGO, the manager of a public housing project in the little town of Hopewell, Virginia, passed an uncomfortable hour upon the public stage. He had issued a certain regulation, in a spirit of economy and social uplift, by which he proposed to maintain his project efficiently and to lead his tenants to the better life. Toward this end, he ordained that henceforth his charges could keep no pets; he decreed that no light bulb of a greater power than 60 watts could burn; and then he laid down the mandate that no tenant could consume intoxicating liquors in his own living room, or for that matter, in the kitchen or anywhere else.

Now the first of these might have been defended as a reasonable restraint upon one's liberties, for man's Noblest Friend can be a confounded nuisance; and the second of these might possibly have been defended in the name of economy, although this is doubtful. The tenants soon enough would thoughtfully have screwed in two 60-watt bulbs where a single 100-watt bulb had burned before, and the project's light bill would have soared by a full 20 percent.

But there was no defense for the third edict from the manager's office, as a vigilant press made clear forthwith. Virginia editors nailed the villain to a cross of scorn; local radio commentators took up the cry; a national television program found Hopewell and peered myopically into the project. From time to time we scribes and pundits are a little vague toward infringements upon individual freedom; often we overlook some subtle encroachment of the welfare state. This time we were alert. This time we were keen! A man's freedom to take off his shoes and drink beer was at stake, and this high freedom, though it seems not to have been enunciated with the other four or five in the fog-shrouded Atlantic, is the sort of freedom one defends to the death. We gave him the works.

The upshot of all this was that the Hopewell Housing Authority nervously rescinded the order, or so much of it as applied to lightbulbs and bourbon; the project manager, brooding over the unwillingness of fallen man to be uplifted, went back to collecting his rents; the local press went victoriously on to the basketball games. It was a two-day story.

But unhappily, it seems to me, the real story was missed, for the Hopewell decree spoke eloquently of the evil abroad in our land; these petty, domineering regulations spoke of statism in terms the ordinary man could comprehend. Talk of "governmental controls" or warn of "infringements upon individual liberty," and the talk and the warning

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are largely lost. But a 100-watt bulb is a tangible thing, and a can of beer may adorn the humblest home. Here was the hand of the omnipotent state reaching into a citizen's living room, cutting off his lights and corking his bottle; here in Hopewell, in the person of an earnest if misguided Sunday School teacher, Big Brother was watching us, and to contemplate the incident was to sense a sudden chill along the spine.

The lesson to be drawn in Hopewell was the lesson that some of us, beating in cheerful futility at our Underwoods, are forever attempting to draw — that governmental controls inevitably must accompany governmental subsidies, that the authority of the state inevitably will be used to curb the liberty of the individual, that as bureaucratic powers are extended, bureaucratic abuses must be extended also. But we do not often find a lesson in a lightbulb. Here we did.

THE SAME COLD SHADOW of statism is to be found not merely in one public housing project in Hopewell, Virginia, but in 450,000 public housing units across the country; and not only in public housing, but in housing generally. It is doubtful if one person in 10,000 grasps the fantastic magnitude of the government's operations in the field of housing and mortgage finance, or pauses to consider where current "housing acts" are taking us.

So-called "low income public housing" offers merely the most obvious manifestation of the statist philosophy at work in the field. We have three such public housing projects in my own city; they include 1,200 one-to-four-bedroom apartments, though they are not often called apartments. They are called "units." These units are occupied by 1,200 families whose sole discernible qualification for the bounty of the taxpayers is that their incomes, or at least their reportable, discoverable incomes, are not above certain fixed amounts.

A man and wife may apply for admission provided their incomes do not exceed $2,200 a year; a family of four is eligible up to $2,400; a family of five up to $2,700 a year. Hereabouts the tenants pay rent that may range all the way from $14 a month to $50 a month, depending upon a baffling table of values and factors. So long as they pay up by the sixth of the month and keep their incomes at a deserving sociological level, they are set: stove and refrigerator furnished, all utilities included in rent.

In theory, these rentals are supposed to be fixed at a scale one-fifth less than comparable private apartments would command; in practice, we found locally that apartments in the public housing projects are renting for about half what comparable private property would rent for. *Nationally, the American taxpayers put up a subsidy of $63,000,000 a year* to close the gap between rental income and project operating costs. Locally, the figure can be pinned down to something more comprehensible: the taxpayers provide $370 a year for each of the 1,200 families in our local projects. For every dollar in rent paid by the tenants, the taxpayer pays one dollar, too. This is called the taxpayer's "contribution" to the public housing program.

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THE INTERESTING THING is that while "low income public housing" is widely recognized and frequently resented (the House of Representatives is forever killing off the public housing program, only to bow grumpily to the senior wisdom of the Senate), other governmental housing programs continue to expand to the sound of large, approving applause. What so proudly we hail as the "boom in private residential construction" is a boom with a faintly hollow sound, for it stems entirely from the proliferate programs of Federal loan insurance.

You do not build a subdivision in America any more without Federal loan insurance; you scarcely build a single house without Federal loan insurance. The first question that is asked of an architect is not if his plan is sound, or if his stresses are properly computed; the first question is whether his design meets the MPR, or to spell out the abbreviation, whether it meets the Minimum Property Requirements of the Federal Housing Administration. Woe betide the builder whose kitchen shelf is 10½ inches deep instead of 11 inches, or whose closet is 35 inches wide instead of 36. Let us use steel cut nails on the flooring! Let us use steel cut nails, or there will be no insurance; no insurance, no loan; no loan, no house.

The building industry, that citadel of the free enterprise system, has seen the light; it worships at the shrine of the FHA. And strange to say, the builders who wax indignant at public housing subsidies are marvelously warm to loan insurance. It is plainly wrong for the taxpayer to pay the tenant's rent, but somehow plainly right for the taxpayer to assume the lender's risk.

What does the risk amount to? The Hoover Commission, in its report of March 14, put total loans, guarantees, commitments and authorizations of all agencies in the housing field at $59,000,000,000. Senator Byrd, in a separate study, has placed the figure at $61,000,000,000. Whatever the accurate figure is, the contingent liability for housing loans alone evidently is now larger than the entire national debt of just 12 years ago.

No one assumes, of course, that all of these loans will suddenly go bad. Although the number of foreclosures is increasing, the number of foreclosures is still exceedingly small. Yet contingently and potentially, ownership of the vast bulk of housing erected in the past 10 years lies in the hands of the Federal government.

THEY ARE FAR OFF, those hands, but they are busy hands. They are writing manuals, prescribing specifications, dispatching emissaries, issuing regulations. They are conducting research, they are testing materials, they are defining standards. They are binding and loosing, controlling and directing. And many a responsible builder and banker and real estate man, aware of this pervading influence from on high, admits an occasional uneasiness toward it all. It is faintly humiliating, somehow, for a good craftsman to submit his blueprints to officialdom; it is a bit enfeebling, in a sense, for a prudent lender to qualify his pledge of financial support on approval of Federal loan insurance. The

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homeowner, ready to sell his property, feels a sense of helplessness when he finds that the responsibility for fixing his price has been taken effectively out of his hands: no "GI loan" can be insured on property sold at a price higher than the "GI appraisal," and the word of the appraiser is decisive.

To be sure, there is present, demonstrable good to be found in the housing program. Many families move out of the slums and into a public housing project, find there a measure of fresh dignity and hope, and then move out of the project as family income increases. In the field of loan insurance, it is doubtless true that government support has stabilized the money market and opened new and profitable opportunities for builders and lenders. Many a young veteran, buying his house "like rent," will make a go of the venture and find a source of pride, an inspiration to personal industry, in the sense of home ownership.

But "goods" and "benefits" must be weighed in terms of the price one pays, and the price is to be reckoned in much more than dollar subsidies and government salaries. We pay for the housing program in terms of responsibilities surrendered and authorities granted; we pay in the extension of government into the housing business, which is no business of government; we pay in the abuses of privilege and the corruptions of power; we pay in a fantastic bubble of 40-year loans on small equity or no equity at all; and we pay, almost unknowingly, in the diminishing of those qualities of thrift and personal sacrifice and hard achievement that once made the purchase of a home a thrilling and prideful milestone for the family.

The loss is not a loss of money. It is a loss calculated in the vitality and integrity of the enterprise system. When the notion takes root that whole groups of citizens have a right to be subsidized in their rent by their brethren, something happens to old standards of family incentive and personal initiative. When builders and bankers alike surrender their responsibilities so that remote taxpayers may hold the risk, there is a weakening of the fiber, a little tarnishing of the spirit.

And when the presence of government pervades the whole structure, counting the lightbulbs and measuring the shingles, we let down the moat, we open the castle. This was the house of our fathers. Soberly, one raises the question: What have we made of it now?

James J. Kilpatrick is Editor of the *Richmond (Va.) News-Leader.*

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